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Mr. *Cooper's*
S E R M O N
on the G O L D.



BRITISH MUSEUM

Mr. Cooper's

SERMON

on the



BRITISH MUSEUM

By

Publ

Pr

Concio Hyemalis.

A

Winter S E R M O N.

BEING A

Religious Improvement

OF THE

Irresistable Power

OF

G O D's C O L D.

Preach'd

January 23. 1736, 7

By *William Cooper*, M. A.

Pastor to a Church in B O S T O N.

*Publish'd (from the Notes of the Sermon) for the Use
of Families.*

B O S T O N:

Printed by J. Draper, for J. Edwards and
H. Foster in Cornhil. 1737.

Concio Hymnals

WINTER

SERMON

BRING A

Religious Improvement

OF THE

Intestable Power

OF

GOD'S WORD



By William Cooper, M.A.

Pastor to a Church in Boston

1818 (from the Library of the Senate for the City of London)

BOSTON

Printed by J. Davis, for J. Edwards and

H. Kistner in Cornhill. 1818

THE
Religious Improvement
 OF THE
 C O L D.

P S A L. 147. 15 — 18.

*H E sendeth forth his commandment upon earth :
 his word runneth very swiftly.*

*He giveth Snow like wool : he scattereth the hoar
 frost like ashes.*

*He casteth forth his ice like morsels : Who can
 stand before his cold ?*

*He sendeth out his word and melteth them : he
 causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.*

More especially those Words in Verse 17.

Who can stand before his Cold ?

T H E changes and extremities of
 the weather, are the matter of
 our daily observation, and the
 subject of our common talk ; and
 serve, perhaps oftner than any one
 thing, to open our conversation
 when we meet together ; But how seldom do
 we

we think and speak of these things after a religious manner, with a due regard to GOD the great author and director thereof; who shews His power, and serves the purposes of His providence thereby? We are too apt to account for them from second causes only, and to overlook the first; forgetting that God keeps the direction and government of all causes in His own hand, and that all the springs of nature are turn'd by Him as he pleases.

The Psalmist was not so inobservant and irreligious as this. He adores the God of Israel as the God of nature; "that God from whom all the powers of nature are deriv'd, and on whom they depend, and who produceth all the changes of the seasons, particularly of the winter season. He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth, his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels: Who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word and melteth them: He causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow. *

* Thro'out the book of Psalms, the great God is acknowledged and ador'd, in lofty strains of devotion, on account of his standing works of Creation & Providence; so that one would think *themselves*, were they possess'd with a real inward veneration and esteem of the Being they verbally acknowledge, would speak reverently of, and be highly delighted with, these sacred Poems, and other passages of holy writ, wherein natural religion is express'd in its height and vigour. For where do they find in the volumes of the learned Pagans, so much admir'd and quoted, any thing spoken of the works of God, with equal majesty and life, so suited to raise the mind and warm the heart, as what we meet with in the 8th, 104th, and this 147th Psalm, of the divinely inspired Prophet and Poet David? This

This is a lively and beautiful description of the winter season, which succeeds the summer. How is the face of the earth then changed? The gay and pleasant flowers are withered, the fruits for delight and necessity are gathered in, and the creatures that us'd to feed and play in the verdant pastures and meadows are hous'd; and nothing to be seen abroad but snow, frost, and ice, † which are gendred by the cold which we now feel, until the temper of the air is alter'd, by the return of the sun, and the blowing of warmer winds, by which the frost, snow, and ice, are presently dissolv'd, and the face of the earth happily renew'd.

The works of God should always lead us to His word; for *that* explains *them*, and *they* inforce *that*: And it is the duty of the Lord's ministers to suit His word to His providences; which, I think, is our endeavour from time to time, according to *the measure of the gift of Christ* bestowed on us. Therefore as we have felt, and seen the effects of the cold in the weeks past, in a degree beyond what is usual, I shall endeavour to make a religious improvement of it, in a short discourse this morning, from that part of the text which has been read, *Who can stand before His cold?*

The Thing here spoken of is *the cold*. This the Psalmist speaks of in the *first cause*, or *great author* of it, GOD: *His cold*. And in the *irresistible forces* of it: *Who can stand before His cold?*

† Et glacialis Hyems canos hirsuta capillos. Ovid.

First

First, The thing here spoken of is *the cold*; which is the cause of the frost, snow, and ice of winter, and which is also encreased by them. We feel this, and see the effects of it, yet are at a loss what it is. The best inquirers into the works of nature, philosophize but darkly about it.

It has been question'd by some whether the cold be any thing that is positive, and not a meer privation; and so they make the coldness of a thing to lie in its not having its parts agitated by heat or fire; and then to make a thing become cold, there needs no more, than that the sun, or fire, or some other agent, that more vehemently agitated its parts before, do now cease to do it. But others better account for the cold which we feel, and see such effects of, by supposing a mighty number of *Effluvia*, or subtile particles, of a nitrous saline quality, exhal'd into the air, and that stay and float about in it, when the sun has so far declin'd that its influences are grown weak; and that these corpuscles being exceeding fine, and of a peculiar shape and figure, are fitted to enter bodies that are porous, and being enter'd produce a stiffness in the parts where they enter, and pain in bodies that are sensible. This looks fair and probable, because it is found by experience that salts produce a stiffness in bodies. And that congelation, or freezing, the effect of cold, is from the introduction of other particles into the interstices between the particles of water, is evident, because the dimensions of water, or any thing that is liquid, is encreas'd by freezing, and with such a force in the extension

renson often times, as to break a vessel of considerable strength that contains the water. --- But it is the theological, and not the philosophical consideration of the cold which is now propos'd, and so I pass to speak in the

II^d Place, Of the first cause, and great author of it, who is GOD. For the Psalmist calls it in our text, *His cold*.

The God of grace and glory, is also the God of nature. He has established the laws of nature; and this is one law, that while the earth remains, day and night, heat and cold, summer and winter, shall not cease, Gen. 8. 22.

He that made the earth, has appointed the different climates of its several regions. So the Psalmist acknowledges, Psa. 74. 16, 17. *The day is thine, the night also is thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun: Thou hast set all the borders of the earth; thou hast made the summer and the winter.*

Summer and winter are according to the motions of the SUN in the heavens; one of those great lights which God made in the beginning, *For signs and seasons, and for days and years*, Gen. 1. 14. "When the sun is more directly over the earth, then tis summer; when it declines more towards the south, then tis winter in the northern climates; as it is cold in the southern climates, when the sun removes far northward." Now the motions of the sun (or if you will, of our earth about it) are of Gods ordering. He that prepared the light of the sun, mark'd out its diurnal and annual course for it, which it has

† See the Honourable Boyle's Experimental History of Cold, And Dr. C. Mather's Christian Philosopher.

kept for these five or six thousand years. *Psalm 119. 91. They, (i.e. the earth and heavenly bodies) continue to this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.*

There are some **CONSTELLATIONS** in the heavens, which, besides the sun, have their influences upon our earth, in causing cold and warm seasons; to produce the pleasures of the spring, and introduce the rigors of the winter. These also are under God's command, who brings them forth in their respective seasons, and can restrain or increase their influences as he pleases. Therefore these are among the questions which the great God put to *Job*, to convince him of his ignorance and of his weakness; *Job 38. from 29. Out of whose womb came the ice? And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendred it? The waters are hid as if cover'd with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen. Canst thou bind the sweet influences of PLEIADES? ("that constellation of seven stars that rises in the spring, and by its benign influences helps to open the frozen earth and make way for the grass, herbs, and flowers, to shoot up.) Or loose the bands of ORION? ("a large constellation of more than thirty stars, that rises late in the fall, and brings with it rough winds, and frost, that bind up the earth.) Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth, ("The stars in the southern signs") in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus, ("those in the northern") with his sons?*

But the most evident cause of the cold that we feel, is the **WIND**. To this *Elihu* attributes it, in *Job 37. 9, 10. Out of the south cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of the north. By the breath* of

of God, (i. e. the wind) frost is given; and the breadth of the winters is straitned. The winds that blow from the north region, fill our air with frigorifick particles, which are the next cause of the cold and freezing with us. But as these particles are of God's making, so are the winds that bring them to us under his command and direction. He causeth his wind to blow, from what quarter he pleases; and it does but fulfill his word. He holds the wind in his fist, and lets it out or gathers it in at his will. He rides upon the wind, and makes it move this way or that way, just as he sees good, and it accomplishes the thing for which he sends it. ---- And thus the cold appears to be GOD's cold; for 'tis of his making and sending; He encreases and continues it as he pleases; inasmuch as those things which cause the cold are of His forming and establishing at first, and are under His constant direction and controul. So He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth, His word runneth very swiftly, --- Then --- Who can stand before his cold? Which brings me in the

III^d place, To speak of the irresistible force of God's cold. Who can stand before his cold? No creature can, as the degree of it is sometimes encreas'd:

The beasts cannot; then they go into dens, and remain in their close places, Job 37. 8. And then the strongest and fiercest of them, are more easily conquer'd. So 'tis recorded of Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, that he went into the pit, and slew a lion, in the time of snow, 2 Sam. 23. 20.

And men can stand before it less than the most of the bruit creatures. They are now forc'd to

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put on their double clothing, and to retire into their houses, and to their fire sides; and all little eno' when the cold is in extremity. Many that have been expos'd to it when the degree of it has not been beyond what is common among us; have lost not only their limbs, but their lives by it. * And God cou'd easily encrease it to such a degree, that all our defences shou'd not be sufficient to secure us from being mortally pierced with it, to the stopping the circulations of the fluids of the body, and therewith the breath of life. - And so I come to see what good Use may be made of this winter meditation; to shew you how the cold we feel, may be improv'd to the ends of devotion and practice. And in this part of the discourse I must still be short, because we can't stand long before His cold.

Let us reflect now, think, and say,

1. The Lord is great in POWER! He makes the sons of men to know this, if indeed they will know it, in his changing of the seasons. The effect of cold particularly, which is freezing; whereby *the breadth of the waters is straitned*; the rivers that spread themselves, and flow'd with a great deal of strength and liberty, are suddenly arrested, congeal'd, and bound up, so as to become a strong bridge for men to walk and ride on to the opposite shore; this is such an instance of the power of God, as if were not common, would be most astonishing to us; like that work

* The present Winter has given us more instances than one of Persons that have died by the cold.

of

of wonder at the red sea, † when the waters divided, and the children of Israel pass'd thro' the sea on dry ground. Or that at the river Jordan, || the waters whereof rose up on one side and stood upon a heap, but fail'd on the other side, and were cut off, to give them another dry and safe passage.

Indeed the works of God are all wonderful; whither they are equally so or no. It is only their commonness, or rather our ignorance and inconsiderateness, that prevents our admiration. But it certainly argues a low and inattentive mind, to disregard and slight wonderful things, only because they are stated and common. They are the common works of God about which we are admonish'd, Job 26. 24, 25. *Remember that thou magnifie his work which men behold. Every man may see it, man may behold it afar off.*

2. WISDOM, as well as might is His! His wisdom appears in the variety of his works. Every thing is beautiful in its season; and there is a beauty in every season of the year. God has for wise ends appointed the succession of summer and winter. The fruitfulness of the earth, and the health of man, are consulted hereby. The cold of the winter, purifies the air; and generally cold countries are the most healthful and long liv'd. And the snow, produc'd by the cold, not only waters the earth, but cherishes it, and makes it to bring forth. Some of the most beneficial fruits of the earth, are our winter grain, produc'd by God's blessing on the cold & snow.

† Exod. 14th ch. || Joshua 3. ch.

Psal.

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Psal. 104. 24. O Lord how manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all: The earth is full of thy riches.

3. Know we that the Lord is the **TRUE** and **FAITHFUL** God. He is faithful to his covenant of providence, recorded in *Gen. 8. 22. That while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, shou'd not cease.* This has been preserved inviolable hitherto, for several thousands of years, and doubtless will be to the end of time. And will not he who is so faithful to his covenant of providence, made with the world in his servant *Noah*, be as faithful to his covenant of grace and peace, made with his people in **JESUS CHRIST**; in whom all the promises are yea and amen? *The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; day and night, summer and winter, will cease; but the covenant of my peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee, Isai. 54. 10.*

4. The Lord is slow to anger, as well as great in power! Otherwise he had with his cold destroy'd such provoking rebels before now. O how much to be admir'd is the patience of God with sinners, when he cou'd so soon and so easily arm any one of his creatures, and use this part of his artillery the cold alone, for their destruction. *Mal. 3. 6. I am the Lord, I change not: Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

5. Let us then stand in awe and not sin! Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we **STRONGER** than he? To be sure not when we can't stand before his cold. Let us then take heed how

how we offend him; and therefore take heed of sin; for we can offend him by nothing else. Job 37. latter end, *With God is terrible majesty. Touching the almighty --- He is excellent in power--- Men do therefore fear before him.*

6. We shou'd be *patient under the cold*, since 'tis God's cold. When our bodies are pinched by it at any time, and our hands seal'd up, in its disabling us for our work and business; or we are put to extraordinary expence to guard ourselves against it; let us bear these and such inconveniencies arising from the cold, without murmuring or fretting: Let us beware least in our tho'ts or words we charge God foolishly; but on the contrary shew in both a suitable subjection to the supreme governour of the world, and orderer of the seasons. Rom. 9. 20. *Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*

7. Let us learn our obligation to *thankfulness*; for warm houses, clothes, and beds; for comfortable food & fuel, to relieve us against the rigor of the cold!

And it deserves a particular thankful notice, that God has spar'd our habitations to us in this extream season that has pass'd over us; that fire has not broken out in this large town, in which there are such a vast number of fires kept every day, & so many careless and vicious inhabitants, at a time when the water in the docks. and in many of our pumps is frozen, and men cou'd not stand long before the cold to put out a fire. This, I say, is a wonder of undeserved mercy, for which we are indebted to a kind and watchful providence,

providence. Psal. 127. 1. *Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh in vain.*

We shou'd be thankful also if we our selves, and our families, are kept in health, in a season which very much adds to the danger and calamity of sickness: *I will praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God.* When our saviour foretold the destruction that was coming upon Jerusalem, he bid his disciples, Matt. 24. 20. *To pray that their flight might not be in the winter*; for the season wou'd be a very afflicting circumstance in the dreadful calamity. And it teaches us, That to be preserv'd from those calamities to which we are expos'd, in a season wherein they wou'd most be of all distressing and afflictive to us, is a circumstance of mercy that calls for a religious and thankful notice.

We shou'd likewise be thankful to God who has carried us thus far thro' the difficulties of the present hard winter, and thro' all the winters of the years of our lives. If his visitation had not constantly preserv'd our spirits, his cold had been too hard for us, notwithstanding all the reliefs against it, with which we are provided. The aged among us have been carried thro' many a winter. The years of your lives contain some scores of winters; and, tho' it may be of a tender and weakly constitution, yet having obtain'd help of God you continue to this day. You will say with a devout pleasure and gratitude, *By thee have I been holden up from the womb: and even to old age thou art He; to heat hairs thou dost carry!* Psal. 71. 6. *Isai. 46. 4.*

8. Let us beware of the temptations of the season; and not make the cold an unjust pretence to neglect any of our duties. It is among the Proverbs of the wise Solomon, which we shou'd not willingly fall under the rebuke of, *The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold*, Prov. 20. 4. The usual exercises of religion should still go on. The cold should not keep us out of our closets, nor chill our devotions there. It shou'd not keep us from the house of God, and cause us to forsake the assembling of our selves together, for worship on the Lord's days, as the manner of too many is, even of the young and healthy.

Neither shou'd the business of our particular calling stop, if we can go on in it --- But if God does now seal up your hands, and disable you to follow your worldly business, beware that satan does not take advantage of it to set you about his work; that you be not entic'd to drinking and gaming, and an excess of riot, when you can't work at your lawful calling.

Why shou'd you not employ some of this time of leisure from your other work, in the work of your own salvation; to settle your accounts with God, and prepare to appear before Him at death and judgment which are hastning on you? This would certainly be your wisdom now, and you comfort afterwards. Thus you wou'd be a gainer in spirituals, by a cessation from secular business; and tho' you did not get forward in the world at this time, you would lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come, to lay hold at last of eternal life.

9. Let

9 Let us guard not only against the outward but *spiritual* cold; take care that we don't grow finfully cold in our love to God, His ways, truths and ordinances: For where there is the truth of love, there may yet be a great abatement of the vigour of it, so as to displease and offend God. This was the charge which Christ exhibited against the church of *Ephesus*, Rev. 2. 4. that *she had left her first love*. The christians which compos'd that church, had not their affections so warm and lively as they had been --- But it is good, says the apostle, to be always zealously affected in a good thing. And he elsewhere gives that caution and direction together, *Not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit serving the Lord*. This advice shou'd be the more regarded by us, because coldness in religion is the temper of the church at this day, as cold is the temper of the climate where we live; and we are doubtless fallen into those unhappy times, which our saviour foretold and forewarn'd us of, when *iniquity shall abound, and the love of many wax cold*. Matt. 24. 12.

Next to the love of God we shou'd keep up a warm love to our neighbour; and not give occasion for that reproachful proverb, *As cold as Charity*. Therefore the colder the season is, the warmer shou'd our charity be; for then the needs of the poor are greatly encreased. Blessed be God that this excellent grace is so warm in many of you that hear me, whereby the bowels of the poor members of Christ are refreshed! But what thanks shou'd we render to God for those at a distance from us, who are so enriched by Him to all bountifulness, both to the brethren
at

at home, and to strangers abroad, that their charities are diffus'd like the kind rays of the morning sun, which take hold of the ends of the earth? -- Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!

10. If none can stand before the cold of His frosts, how can any stand before the heat of His wrath? The Scripture speaks of this too as irresistible; and as what can't be described or comprehended. --- *Who knows the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath --- Who can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire! --- And again, Our God is a consuming fire! --- His anger is extended to the objects of it beyond the present life and world. And, O! Who can dwell with devouring fire? Who can inhabit with everlasting burnings? --- Let us therefore deprecate falling under the eternal wrath of Almighty God. Let us dread to appear before him as an absolute God, and therefore seek to get him reconcil'd to us in the son of his love. He is well pleas'd with his son Jesus Christ, and it is in Him only that he can be well pleas'd with us. It is only by faith in Him that we can be secure from God's vindictive and eternal wrath. In Him then let us take sanctuary; even in Jesus, who delivereth from the wrath to come, 1 Thes. I. 10.*

Lastly, The better country is the heavenly: For there will be no uncomfortable changes or vicissitudes. There nothing will molest or disquiet us. The sun will not smite us, nor the cold pierce us. That is a world of which we have this description, Rev. 21. 23. It has no need of

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the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of the Lord does lighten it, and the lamb is the light thereof. God in Christ will be an everlasting fountain of light and joy to the blessed inhabitants, and infinitely more than supply the place of creature comforts. There we shall dwell under the direct beams of the glorious sun of righteousness, and be always enlivened and warmed by him. Here we must shorten our devotions sometimes, because we can't stand long before his cold; there we shall *serve him day and night in his temple*, without any thing to impede us, and *go no more out*. Our now weak bodies will then be powerful ones, never weary, never need any of those refreshments which now we can't do long without; they will be able to keep pace with our souls in the service of God, and the devotions of them will be ever warm and lively, like those of their companions the angels, whom he makes a flame of fire.

O! how shou'd the inconveniencies of the present world, make us long for that, and hasten to it as fast as we can; where we shall bid an eternal farewell to winter, and enter upon an everlasting spring of heavenly joys and consolations, without any mixture or alloy? O that our present sabbaths might be the pledge and foretast hereof! And God grant, that seeing a promise is left us of *entring into this rest*, this promised and good land, we may none of us come short of it!

9 JU 64

F I N I S.



A poetical PARAPHRASE of
the Text, By Doctor *WATTS*:
In his Imitation of the Psalms
of *David*.

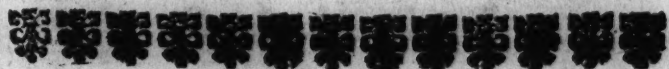
HIS steady Counsels change the Face
Of the declining Year ;
He bids the Sun cut short his Race,
And wintry Days appear.

His hoary Frost, his fleecy Snow
Descend and cloath the Ground ;
The liquid Streams forbear to flow,
In icy Fetters bound.

When from his dreadful Stores on high
He pours the ratling Hail,
The Wretch that dares this God defy
Shall find his Courage fail.

He sends his Word and melts the Snow,
The Fields no longer mourn ;
He calls the warmer Gales to blow,
And bids the Spring return.

The changing Wind, the flying Cloud
Obey his mighty Word :
With Songs and Honours sounding loud
Praise ye the sovereign Lord.



1148. P. 12

of David.
In his imitation of the Psalm
the Text, By Doctor WATTS:
A poetical PARAPHRASE of

And windy days appear,
He bid the sun out from his face,
Of the declining year;
His ready counsels change the face

In icy fetters bound,
The living streams forbear to flow,
Decease and death the ground;
His heavy frost his hoary snow.

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And was the Spring return
He calls the warmer Gales to blow,
The Field no longer barren;
He sends his Word and melts the Snow.

Praise ye the forever Lord,
With songs and Harps sounding loud,
Obeys his mighty Word -
The changing Wind, the flying Cloud

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